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ABSTRACT

This study determines some of the competencies a public school teacher should possess before being assigned a student teacher. Subjects in the study included a random sample of university faculty who supervise secondary student teachers, student teacher placement directors in public school districts, principals of secondary schools, and teachers in secondary schools who have supervised two or more student teachers. The research instrument was designed to reveal attitudes toward teacher competencies in five categories: classroom instruction, evaluation, human relations, planning, and professionalism. The primary finding of this study indicated that teachers who are to be assigned a student teacher must demonstrate their greatest competencies in the area of classroom instruction and human relations skills. Professionalism was ranked last by each of the four subject groups. (MJM)

TEACHING COMPETENCIES FOR SUPERVISING TEACHERS*

For much too long the basis on which a public school teacher has been selected to supervise a student teacher has been done in a haphazard fashion, including such criteria as, "he knows his subject," "he is the chairman of the department," "he is active in professional associations," "he is liked by his students and is accepted by his colleagues," "it is his turn to have a student teacher," or a combination of these and many others. While professional educators are quick to admit that the selection of the supervising teacher is crucial to the student teaching process, little research has been done to correlate the thinking of various levels of professional educators on this issue.

To this end, the authors recently conducted a study to determine the answer to this question--"What competencies should a public school teacher possess before being assigned a student teacher?" The subjects in the study included a random sample of:

- (1) university faculty who supervise secondary student teachers,
- (2) student teacher placement directors in public school districts,
- (3) principals of secondary schools, and
- (4) teachers in secondary schools who have supervised two or more student teachers.

The research instrument employed, "Competencies Necessary Before Being Assigned a Student Teacher," was designed to reveal attitudes toward

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teacher competencies in five categories. The five categories were:

(1) Classroom Instruction, (2) Evaluation, (3) Human Relations, (4) Planning, and (5) Professionalism.

The findings of this study were numerous, but by far the single most significant was the following:

Each of the four groups of educators (university faculty, placement directors, principals, and teachers) ranked the five categories of teacher competencies in exactly the same order.* They were:

1. Classroom Instruction (Most Important)
2. Human Relations
3. Planning
4. Evaluation
5. Professionalism (Least Important)

The primary finding of this study is apparently clear enough. Teachers who are to be assigned a student teacher must demonstrate their greatest competencies in the areas of classroom instruction and human relations skills. This is particularly noteworthy when one considers that colleges of education have begun to place their emphasis on producing teachers who are able to combine both appropriate classroom methodology and skills in human relations. In addition, much is being written in educational journals about the necessity of this dual emphasis.¹ In short, a teacher whose competencies lie in the categories of classroom instruction and human relations skills is the person that each of the four groups of professional educators deem most worthy of being assigned a student teacher.

*See table for mean scores for each group.

¹Campbell, Lloyd P., "Cognitive and Affective: A Dual Emphasis," Contemporary Education. 46:13-14, Fall, 1974.

It is also worth noting that professionalism was ranked last by each of the four groups. In spite of the fact that there has been continued efforts toward increasing membership and activity in professional education associations, each of these four groups of educators apparently perceives professionalism as having little bearing on whether a teacher should be assigned a student teacher.

As a result of this study, the authors recommend the placement of student teachers with those public school teachers who place their primary emphasis on classroom instruction and human relations skills. In addition, it is further recommended that research should be conducted which would specify the exact competencies within each of the five categories which a teacher must possess before being assigned a student teacher.

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR'S MEAN SCORES ON FIVE
CATEGORIES OF TEACHER COMPETENCIES

COMPETENCIES	EDUCATORS			
	University Faculty N=70	Public School Placement Directors N=39	Secondary Principals N=49	Secondary Teachers N=169
Instruction	28.7	27.5	26.6	28.5
Human Relations	26.2	25.9	26.3	26.2
Planning	24.1	25.1	24.3	23.4
Evaluation	22.3	23.4	21.7	21.7
Professionalism	18.7	19.3	21.0	20.2

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